(b) the total expenditure incurred due to the subsidy given to palm oil;

(c) whether Government considers extending the subsidy to coconut oil; and

(d) whether it has come to the notice of Government that subsidy given to imported palm oil is adversely affecting the domestic sale of coconut oil?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Details of customs duty changes on imports of palm oil during the last 3 years is as under:-

Sl. No.	Date from which applicable	Applicable rate of the Customs duty on Crude Palm (ad valorem)	Applicable rate of the Customs duty on Refmd Palm Oil (ad valorem)
1.	11.08.2006	70%	80%
2.	24.01.2007	60%	67.5%
3.	13.04.2007	50%	57.5%
4.	23.07.2007	45%	52.5%
5.	21.03.2008	20%	27.5%
6.	01.04.2008	Nil	7.5%

(b) A "Scheme for Distribution of subsidised imported edible oils through States/Union Territories had been implemented during 2008-09. The Scheme ended on 31.3.2009. Under the Scheme, Refined Bleached Deodorized (RBD) palmolein and refined soyabean oil had been packed in 1 litre/ or ½ litre had been given to States by designated Public Sector Undertakings. The subsidy had been Rs. 15 per Kg of packed edible oil handed over to the States till 20th January 2009 and thereafter, the subsidy was increased to Rs.25/- per kg up to 31.3.2009. The total expenditure incurred under subsidy on imported edible oils handed over to States is Rs. 424.25 crores. The expenditure incurred due to subsidy given to RBD palmolein under the Scheme was Rs. 403.47 crores.

(c) The Scheme envisages subsidy for only imported edible oils. The scheme ended on 31.3.2009. The Government does not consider extending the subsidy to coconut oil.

(d) It has not come to the notice of Government that subsidy given to imported palm oil (RBD palmolein) is adversely affecting the domestic sale of coconut oil.

Introduction of GM Food and GM Technology

1491. SHRI BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intends to introduce genetically modified (GM) food and GM technology in food crops;

(b) whether it is a fact that GM food is facing stiff opposition from Environment and Forests Ministry and the Planning Commission as well but GM Technology in non-edible agro products like cotton has fewer objections of the plan panel; and

(c) whether there is any possibility of India's crop exports could be hit if it allowed GM food crops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Several GM food crops such as; brinjal, rice, okra, potato, groundnut, tomato, corn, cabbage, cauliflower, mustard and sorghum expressing different traits are under various stages of R & D and field testing with the approval of the Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation (RCGM) of Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Genetic Engineering-Approval Committee (GEAC) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF), Government of India.

(b) The Government of India has strict guidelines to test and approve GM crops including GM food crops. These guidelines address all concerns being raised by those opposing GM foods. MOEF has not opposed the introduction of GM food crops in India.

(c) Bt Cotton is the only transgenic crop approved by the GEAC for commercial cultivation in India. Export of cotton has not been affected due to release of Bt cotton in India.

Development of new seeds

†1492. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a need to develop new seeds by research keeping in view the agricultural problems of the country;

(b) if so, the response of Government in this regard;

(c) whether the new seeds have been developed according to the agricultural needs of the country during the last three years;

(d) if so, the names of the seeds and the situations in which they are advantageous; and

(e) the quantity in which they are available in the country for use?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, improved varieties/hybrids with more productivity with superior attributes are being developed and it is a continuous process.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) List of improved varieties/hybrids is given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below).

(e) About 592.83 Lakh quintal certified/quality seeds of improved varieties of field crops was made available for the three years.

---

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.